Village Improvement Scheme.

No. R. 9859-908—L. R. 15-15-154, DATED 24TH APRIL 1916.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF MYSORE.

GENERAL AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Order No. R. 9859-908—L. R. 15-15-154, dated 24th April 1916.

A number of villages were inspected in the months of December 1915 and February 1916; and twenty of them, as detailed in the margin, were examined more or less minutely, with a view to ascertain how the scheme of Village Improvement was working, what practical difficulties existed and how such difficulties might be removed.

Tumkur District.

Tumkur Taluk ...	Hebbur.
Kunigal Taluk ...	Amritur.
	Hosakere.
	Nidasale.
	Sante Mavathur.
	Yeliyur.

Hassan District.

Channarayapatna Taluk ...	Hirisave.
	Kirisave.

Mysore District.

Mysore Taluk ...	Varuna.
	Varakodu.
	Yelwal.
Nanjangud Taluk ...	Kowlanda.
	Devarsanhalli.
	Devanur.
Yedatore Taluk ...	Tippur.
	Chandagal.
Seringapatam Taluk ...	Belagola.
Mandya Taluk ...	Volgarahalli.
Nagamangala Taluk ...	Bellur.
	Nagarthihalli.

With the object of examining the working of the Committees in their normal state, the inspections were carried out practically without previous notice.

The detailed notes of inspection of the twenty villages, referred to, have been communicated separately to the officers concerned.

2. *Work done.*—In nearly every one of the twenty villages inspected, some sanitary or other improvement work had been attempted, the amount of interest taken depending on the activity of local officers, the capacity for co-operation and the general level of education in the village.

Some attention had been paid to keep the interior of the villages clean, but the outskirts or immediate surroundings had not received much attention. The roads and the neighbourhood of most houses were kept clean. Attempts had been made to clear lantana and undergrowth. Many existing cart-tracks had been improved and new ones constructed. Collections are being made in some places for a village fund to remain in the custody of the people and to be expended by them for the benefit of the village. Newspapers are being largely subscribed for and schools and reading rooms are springing up rapidly.

3. *Extent to which orders under the Village Improvement Scheme are being observed.*—Improvement Committees have been formed in most of the villages inspected. In some, they were in existence for over a year.

In many villages it was noticed that weekly meetings were not being regularly held, and in some they were suspended on account of plague or the harvesting season, or other excuse. But the introduction of the scheme has had this effect. The villagers have begun to think of their wants in regard to education, village extension, water-supply, etc., and to feel a sense of responsibility for the public good.

4. There is some misconception as regards the functions of Village Committees in Union villages. It is necessary to make it clear that the *Union Panchayet* should attend to the ordinary administrative work, *viz.*, sanitation, lighting and other duties specified in the Local Boards Regulation, while all other work coming within the scope of the Village Improvement Scheme should receive the attention of the *Village Improvement Committee.*

5. *Wants of the villages.*—The wants of the villages inspected may be brought under four or five distinct heads, as under :—

(1) Village sites require extension.
(2) Tank weirs require raising.
(3) In places people suffer from lack of occupation.
(4) Some villages suffer from scarcity of drinking water.
(5) Many villages have no approach roads.

6. Government desire that the villages enumerated in paragraph 1 above be inspected in detail by the officers in charge of the Revenue Sub-Divisions concerned to enable them to prepare a correct list of works and improvements required for each village. A programme should be drawn up for each and the more important works carried out as rapidly as possible. Copies of the programmes may be forwarded to Government and a report submitted after the works included in the programme for each village are carried out.

In most cases, the requisite funds will be available from the various sources from which such works are usually carried out. The Deputy Commissioners will decide the source from which funds should be obtained for any particular work and if any specific sanction is needed, they may apply to Government in proper time.

7. Government will be glad if the Deputy Commissioners of Districts can arrange to maintain, in the Taluk Offices, lists of the main wants of all the villages in a taluk. During the inspections referred to above, it was noticed that some Amildars maintained a book of foolscap size for Village Improvement work with a page set apart for each village. On the pages so set apart were noted the main wants of the village as ascertained either by personal inspection, or from reports.

8. With a view to ensure uniformity of practice and to guide the Village Committees to direct their activities to useful channels, the following publications will be helpful :—

(i) A *circular* defining the primary or obligatory duties to be performed and works to be executed, in every village or group of villages for which there is a Committee, and indicating, separately, the optional duties of the Committee. Every Village Committee should attend to the former, and the more advanced villages may also take up as many of the latter duties as possible according to their capacity, inclination and resources.

(ii) A *Manual*, printed both in English and Kanarese, containing—classified under appropriate heads—all the orders on the Village Improvement Scheme, issued from time to time, commencing with Government Order No. 6058-6107—L. R. 430-13-1, dated 6th February 1914. In the Kanarese edition, a short summary will be given, describing in easy popular language, the functions and responsibilities of the villagers, the Committees and the officials concerned.

(iii) *A printed list of questions* for the use of officers inspecting villages, to enable them to readily obtain a clear idea of the condition of the villages and the progress made under the scheme.

(iv) *A small book of model plans* for the village houses and a statement of village works and improvements with brief instructions to suggest ideas of reform and improvement to residents of rural areas generally.

9. The issue of the foregoing publications is, or will be, arranged for as under :—

(1) A circular succinctly indicating the obligatory and optional duties of Village Committees referred to in Clause (i) of paragraph 8 is herewith attached.

Kanarese copies of this circular should be freely distributed to all villages, whether they have Committees or not. A copy should be maintained in every village and hamlet in the State.

(2) The General and Revenue Secretariat will prepare the Manual and the list of questions referred to, respectively, in clauses (ii) and (iii) of the same paragraph.

(3) The Chief Engineer should be requested to instruct the Sanitary Engineer to prepare a book of model plans. The plans should be prepared after studying models in foreign countries and consulting officers and leading public men possessing intimate knowledge of rural life in this State.

10. It is particularly requested that arrangements may be made to issue these publications, after obtaining the approval of Government, before 31st July 1916. Any sanctions needed to facilitate the work and to ensure their timely issue should be applied for without delay.

V. R. THYAGARAJA IYER,
Secy. to Govt., Rev. Dept.

To—The Revenue Commissioner in Mysore.
Other Heads of Departments.
The Secretaries to Government.
The Deputy Commissioners of Districts.

CIRCULAR.

In Government Order No. R. 4497-505—L. R. 15-15-63, dated 4th November 1915, the Deputy Commissioners were requested to arrange, as far as possible, to bring every village and hamlet under the operation of the Village Improvement Scheme. The scheme has been in force now for about two years and it is found that much diversity of practice exists in giving effect to its provisions in the different districts of the State. Experience shows that even after making allowance for every variety of local conditions, some of the more important works and practices associated with the Village Improvement Scheme might be standardised with advantage. It is necessary to insist on the performance of certain primary duties by every existing Village Committee. The object of this circular is to specify these primary or obligatory duties of the Village Committees as distinguished from their optional functions. In this way, the essential primary duties which no village should do without, will be separated from the higher activities and duties which may be undertaken as the villages advance in education and enlightenment.

It may be stated that, in laying down these obligatory duties, no new works or duties not already included in previous Government orders or circulars have been added.

I. Primary or Obligatory Duties.

2. The following duties should be observed in every village or group of villages for which there is a Committee.

(1) *Weekly Half-day Labour.*

Once a week, usually every Monday morning, the villagers should meet and carry out urgent sanitary and other improvement works in the village by giving their labour for 4 or 5 hours (commencing from about 7 o'clock in the morning). Every house should give one labourer, or in lieu of personal labour, a contribution of half to one anna according to the circumstances of the family. Such a participation in the work of common benefit to the village should be regarded as a token of respectability and public spirit and the people should be taught to take a pride in contributing their share. A list of families who are for any reasons unable to pay their contribution and may be exempted should be maintained.

(2) *Weekly Meeting for Spreading Useful Information.*

A week day should be fixed for this work by the Deputy Commissioner for the taluk as a whole. The meeting should begin at about 5 o'clock in the evening and last for two or three hours. It should be utilised for reading newspapers, sanitation and village prosperity rules and for lectures and discussions and propaganda work. Some little time should be spent at every meeting in going over the principal wants of the village and examining the progress made in supplying the wants and removing defects and deficiencies.

(3) *Collecting a Village Fund.*

The funds raised in the village should, on an average, amount to not less than a rupee per annum per family residing in the village, in addition to the weekly labour and special contributions for supplementing Government grants or other special works. The money should be collected and spent by the Committees themselves.